

DNRC Fire Business Committee
September 30, 2008 – Missoula MT

There was a problem this year concerning multiple incident numbers on one fire. On Dunn Mountain fire (SLO) the Billings Dispatch Center issued a number when the first call went out. This number is a local government assist number that doesn't tie out to any number that the land office issues. They issued a new number when DNRC agreed to a County assist and then another number came up somewhere between transition of CAT to the Type II team.

The multiple numbers become an issue when it comes to tracking costs and doing reports in ISUITE. BDC told Sue Clark, IBA on Dunn Mtn, that once the numbers are in they absolutely cannot change them. **During the off-season SLO will have to sit down with BDC to see how to avoid this situation in the future.**

Becky said that there is still a great deal of confusion as to transports. It continues to confuse people if we pay when they bring out the transport and it sits until the heavy equipment leaves or if they only use it once or twice to move equipment while they are there.

Pam said that the SAC meeting will be in two weeks and transports will be an item of discussion.

Terry would like to see a cheat sheet for Engine Bosses which would answer basic questions about meals, lodging, fuel, etc. They need this type of information especially if they are taking equipment out of region. Pam stated that there is a sheet which was revised from the State of Colorado which has that type of information on it. Matt felt that we could do more work on the sheet to include where to send paperwork, meals, etc. prior to next fire season. This sheet could also go out with pre-season hiring packets so that they can review them and ask questions prior to taking an assignment rather than trying to clean up receipts, questions, etc. when they get back.

We want to make sure that if DNRC or white iron goes out on a federal fire that shift tickets and use invoices are kept. This information needs to be turned into Matt and Pam so that Zook monies can be calculated.

The other problem we have sometimes is that trucks go out and may stay a day or several days and then go home before a team arrives or any finance organization is in place. That is why we need to make sure that everyone keeps a log or shift tickets so that we know what was out there.

Mike stated that fire meals are and continue to be an issue.

Another issue is paying local government within their own jurisdiction. There are beginning to be expectations of being paid from hour one even though the book says we

pay after hour 24. There is also confusion with the career fire depts. about what we will and won't pay.

One complaint from last year is that information didn't get out early enough to the area offices so that the areas can get out the word when they do pre-season meetings and sign-ups.

Everyone liked the system last year where Matt went around to the area offices and hit the highlights of the updates, changes and issues. **Everyone agreed that Matt should do his tour in winter so that if any issues come up they can be discussed prior to finalizing the changes.**

We also need to let Barb know what forms we would like her to put into the website this winter so that she has plenty of time to get them in.

The new MTCARS system seems to be working well, however, Susan suggested that we should be able to enter our own fire numbers in from the land office. Last year if you tried to do MTCARS and the fire wasn't in yet you had to call Barb Powell and ask her to put it in. If Barb was out, it didn't get in until she got back. **Sue will talk to Barb to see if putting our own fires in is a possibility.**

There were some issues last year with ordering IBA's. The normal protocol is to call Matt or Pam but the Area Mgrs. or Line Officers call the person direct. Some AM's are just more comfortable working with certain IBA's and so they will continue to call directly and try to get that person.

The business committee needs to decide what we want to do with the IBA program and what we expect from the IBA's.

Matt stated the same problem every year is that we have no IBA's. When fire season comes down, no one can go. At the type 3 fire level we probably don't need an IBA but for fires above that level we do need one and sometimes more than one.

Everyone on the committee was in agreement that we still need to use IBA's. There was a great deal of discussion on how to recruit IBA's (TLMD folks, retirees, etc.) however if these people aren't in a position to keep up with the current finance rules and policies, they really aren't qualified to go out and be an IBA.

The committee also discussed other options such as a rotation schedule or "on-call" IBA just as we do the duty officer in the land offices. If your name comes up, you go. The problem is that if other land offices are busy so is yours and the office would have to back-fill to get your position filled while you're gone.

Pam will present IBA issue to FAC and pass on our ideas and discussion. We have to get commitment from FAC and from LO's for the IBA program to continue.

Gary O. and Jeff W. joined the meeting via conference phone to discuss payment issues. Jeff said that there was still confusion as to who gets paid the higher rate for meals. Ted's final memo came out on August 24th concerning meals but Jeff never did see it in Helena. Ted's memo still can't supersede State law.

Jeff is working on a document for D of A to change meal allowance law to accommodate fire. This document will explain caloric requirements for firefighters. The first draft is done. **Matt will send Jeff the actual law that explains what we have to feed firefighters.** This information will be included in the document along with meal prices, caterer prices, etc. to show that it is impossible to feed a firefighter on the standard per diem rates.

There were problems on contractor shift tickets (example: Cascade Fire). The people on the team keeping time checked wrong boxes on who was responsible to cover operating supplies or providing operators. More auditing needs to be done to make sure they are corrected before going to Helena. When we transition from one team to another, DNRC folks need to get involved to make sure that the new team understands how to handle the local gov't vs. private contractors so that transition is more seamless.

When bills were incorrect when they got to Helena, Jeff's people called the LO first and verified the error with them before any changes were made. This was helpful.

As every year there were problems with how people interpret the contracts for payment. Problems continue with porta potties, sinks, etc. More training of finance folks is needed as to what the contracts say so that they can pay correctly.

Karl wanted to know if we need to put ATV's out to bid. Jeff stated that the problem with ATV's is that a dealer won't want to put one out for a day or two at \$80.00 per day. A new ATV becomes used as soon as they drive it off the lot. Jeff suggested that if you have to hire ATV's use an \$80.00 a day rental with a 3-week guarantee.

Rental cars – ground support and DNRC folks need to pay more attention to pre and post inspections. Jan stated that she was told that there was the potential of 4-5 claims on rental cars on the Dunn Mtn. fire. When the vehicles were returned to ground support at BDC, Ann V. pulled the inspections and everyone on them were damaged prior to going out on Dunn. The team apparently hadn't looked at the pre-inspections prior to release.

The Fire supervisors are meeting tomorrow and they want porta-tanks back on the tenders. The local government tenders usually all have them on but the private contractors do not. For long distance fires, porta tanks are a must because of the long turn around time to get water. The Fire sups will ask FAC to get that put into Chapter 50.

We need to bone up the contracts with paid departments so they bill us a one-time bill that includes per diem – not bill per diem on a travel voucher. We also need to standardize the contracts with the paid department. **We need to find out from legal if**

we need to get a document from the City Government for a city fire department or can we go directly to the department?

Pam would like everyone to review the new IRA and the clauses and get any comments back to her or Matt. The goal is to get done early and have it done by February 1st. This will give everyone plenty of time to do preseason sign ups with the new forms.

Business Refresher – each land office needs to set up a date in April or May for Matt to do his tour and come up with as many questions as they can for Matt to discuss when he's there.

Line Office training – Pam will ask Ted/Bob if there will be LO training this year and we'll go from there if they want any business training included.

Plan A – Try to tack business refresher on to LO training.

Plan B – No LO training – have at least ½ day training just for IBA's.

Someone suggested putting the mini 260/261 course on the website.

Each land office should put out feelers to see if they can generate interest in the abbreviated 260/261 for locals. If the class does get put on, it will be primarily personnel and equipment time-keeping. Most locals who work in the land office will not be dealing with claims and other information in the class so it will be different this year if it is put on at all.

Homeland Security will be giving grant money to Dept. of Livestock and Dept. of Public Health and Human Services to take ICS training. We may be able to interest some of those folks in taking additional training in 260/261. They would not have the same personnel constraints that DNRC has with everyone being tied up at the same time every summer.

Doug will be contacting Pam for some of these people to talk to.

EFF rates – There was some confusion for LGFF Company Officers. They want to be paid as a STEN but they aren't red-carded to STEN. If they take several structure protection trucks they need to have a position in the EFF pay for that position.

APMC – No one had any issues from APMC. It will be an item on the agenda for NRCC the end of October.

No one has looked or updated the Business Committee charter in ages. **Sue will revise the Charter and get to Matt and Pam to review by next week.** Will send to Bus. Committee to review.

300 Manual - **Becky will continue to work on it.** She will give one chapter at a time to the committee to review as she does it.

Pam will get our two options for getting IBA's out to FAC and Ted can take to Manager's meeting.

We need a standardized template for law enforcement (road blocks, who pays, etc.) Doug suggested that we put a synopsis in Chapter 50 to cover law enforcement.

Chapter 50

Everyone has command vehicles and they are all different with different add-ons – We need to establish a base rate and then do add-ons. **Matt will talk to Jeff about establishing rates.**

Each land office needs to get rates from local ambulance (look at Medicare, Medicaid rates, hourly available and run rates). We can then set some sort of template to pay for local ambulance.

We need to get an ATV rates back in Chapter 50.

The next DNRC Fire Business Committee will be January 13th & 14th in Missoula.